Odds and Ends

BY

Henry A. Beers

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ODDS AND ENDS:

Verses Humorous, Occasional, and Miscellaneous.

BY

HENRY A. BEERS.

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By HENRY A. BEERS.

To

THE CLASS OF 1869

THESE SLIGHT REMINDERS OF OUR COLLEGE LIFE ARE

Affectionately Inscribed.

PREFACE.

THE verses in this little volume were written during a residence at Yale College, first as undergraduate and afterwards as tutor. Those in the earlier division of the book sprang more or less directly from the experiences of college life; the remainder are more miscellaneous in character.

Some have been printed in different periodicals, and others have remained until now in manuscript. The fact that a number of the former were rather widely copied about through the newspapers, has prompted the hope that a collection of such might not be entirely without interest for the general reader.

It may be right to add, that at least half the pieces here included can lay claim to whatever indulgence, if any, is usually given to *juvenilia*, or the work of writers under age.

H. A. B.

NEW HAVEN, *April*, 1878.

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THE THIMBLE ISLANDS.

ODDS AND ENDS.

HIGH ISLAND.

PLEASANT it was at shut of day,
When wind and wave had sunk away,
To hear, as on the rocks we lay,
The fog bell toll;
And grimly through the gathering night
The horn's dull blare from Faulkner's Light,
Snuffed out by ghostly fingers white
That round it stole.

Somewhere behind its curtain, soon
The mist grew conscious of a moon:
No more we heard the diving loon
Scream from the spray;
But seated round our drift-wood fire
Watched the red sparks rise higher and higher,
Then, wandering into night, expire
And pass away.

Down the dark wood, the pines among,
A lurid glare the firelight flung;
So for a while we talked and sung,
And then to sleep;
And heard in dreams the light-house bell,
As all night long in solemn swell
The tidal waters rose and fell
With soundings deep.

LOTUS EATING.

Come up once more before mine eyes,
  Sweet halcyon days, warm summer sea,
Faint orange of the morning skies
  And dark-lined shores upon the lee!
Touched with the sunrise, sea and sky
All still on Memory's canvas lie:
The scattered isles with India ink
Dot the wide back-ground's gold and pink:
Unstirring in the Sunday calm,
  Their profile cedars sharply drawn,
  Bold black against the flushing dawn,
Take shape like clumps of tropic palm,
Night shadows still the distance dim
(Ultra-marine) where ocean's brim
Upholdeth the horizon-rim.

Once more in thought we seem to creep
  By lonely reefs where sea-birds scream,
Ulysses-like, along the deep
  Borne onward in the ocean-stream.

The sea-floor spreadeth glassy still;
No breath the idle sail doth fill;
Our oar-blades smite the heavy seas;
Under the world the morning breeze
Treads with the sun the unknown ways.
  Thus steer we o'er the solemn main
  Eating the Lotus-fruit again,
Dreaming that time forever stays,
Singing "Where, Absence, is thy sting!"
Listening to hear our echoes ring
Through the far rocks where Sirens sing.

THE MERMAID'S GLASS.

'T was down among the Thimble Isles,
That strew for many "liquid miles"
The waters of Long Island Sound:
Our yacht lay in a cove; around
The rocky isles with cedars green
And channels winding in between:
And here a low, black reef was spread,
And there a sunken "nigger-head"
Dimpled the surface of the tide.
From one tall island's cliffy side
We heard the shaggy goats that fed:
The gulls wheeled screaming overhead
Or settled in a snowy flock
Far out upon the lonely rock
Which, like a pillar, seemed to show
Some drowned acropolis below.
Meanwhile, in the warm sea about,
With many a plunge and jolly shout,
Our crew enjoyed their morning bath.
The hairy skipper in his wrath

Lay cursing on the gunwale's rim:
He loved a dip but could not swim;
So, now and then with plank afloat
He 'd struggle feebly round the boat
And o'er the side climb puffing in,
Scraping wide areas off his skin,
Then lie and sun each hirsute limb
Once more upon the gunwale's rim
And shout, with curses unavailing,
"Come out! There 's wind: let 's do some sailing."
A palm-leaf hat, that here and there
Bobbed on the water, showed him where
Some venturous swimmer outward bound
Escaped beyond his voice's sound.
All heedless of their skipper's call,
One group fought for the upset yawl.
The conqueror sat astride the keel
And deftly pounded with his heel
The hands that clutched his citadel,
Which showed — at distance — like the shell
Round which, unseen, the Naiad train
Sport naked on the middle main.
Myself had drifted far away,
Meanwhile, from where the sail-boat lay,
Till all unbroken I could hear
The wave's low whisper in my ear,

And at the level of mine eye
The blue vibration met the sky.
Sometimes upon my back I lay
And watched the clouds, while I and they
Were wafted effortless along. —
Sudden I seemed to hear a song:
Yet not a song, but some weird strain
As though the inarticulate main
Had found a voice whose human tone
Interpreted its own dull moan;
Its foamy hiss; its surfy roar;
Its gentle lapping on the shore;
Its noise of subterranean waves
That grumble in the sea-cliff caves;
Its whish among the drifting miles
Of gulf-wind from the Indian Isles: —
All — all the harmonies were there
Which ocean makes with earth or air.
Turning I saw a sunken ledge
Bared by the ebb, along whose edge
The matted sea-weed dripped: thereon,
Betwixt the dazzle of the sun
And the blue shimmer of the sea,
I saw — or else I seemed to see
A mermaid, crooning a wild song,
Combing with arm uplifted long

The hair that shed its meshes black
Down the slope whiteness of her back.
She held a mirror in her hand,
Wherein she viewed sky, sea, and land,
Her beauty's background and its frame.
But now, as toward the rock I came,
All suddenly across the glass
Some startling image seemed to pass;
For her song rose into a scream,
Over her shoulders one swift gleam
Of eyes unearthly fell on me,
And, 'twixt the flashing of the sea
And the blind dazzle of the sun,
I saw the rock, but thereupon
She sat no longer 'gainst the blue;
Only across the reef there flew
One snow-white tern and vanished too.
But, coasting that lone island round,
Among the slippery kelp I found
A little oval glass that lay
Upturned and flashing in the ray
Of the down-looking sun. Thereto
With scarce believing eyes I drew
And took it captive.

A while there
I rested in the mermaid's lair,

And felt the merry breeze that blew,
And watched the sharpies as they flew,
And snuffed the sea's breath thick with brine,
And basked me in the sun's warm shine;
Then with my prize I made my way
Once more to where the sail-boat lay.
I kept the secret — and the glass;
By day across its surface pass
The transient shapes of common things
Which chance within its oval brings.
But when at night I strive to sound
The darkness of its face profound,
Again I seem to hear the breeze
That curls the waves on summer seas;
I see the isles with cedars green;
The channels winding in between;
The coves with beaches of white sand;
The reefs where warning spindles stand;
And, through the multitudinous shimmer
Of waves and sun, again the glimmer
Of eyes unearthly falls on me,
Deep with the mystery of the sea.

HUMOROUS AND OCCASIONAL PIECES.

THE DARKE LADYE.

A shadow haunts about my door,
In midnight dreams I see
An Afrite-woman pace the floor:—
It is the Darke Ladye!

Of mournful sable is her robe:
Her eyes like waves are rolled
Full whitely; from her ear's black lobe
Hangs down the red, red gold.

The clothe-baskét is in her hand,
The tear is in her e'e:
Her children two behind her stand
While speaks the Darke Ladye:

"Full thrice with round, vermilion face
Behind the cedars black,
The moon hath risen in her place
On broad Quinnipiac.

"Full fourscore dawns have streaked the bay
Since thou, upon thy knee,

Didst vow the red, red gold to pay
Unto the Darke Ladye.

"I washed from soil and inky blots,
Thy cuffs and eke thy shirt;
The Æthiop changed another's spots
And cleansed the stranger's dirt.

"And though thy stains as scarlet were,
With blood of strawberry,
All snowy grew each handkercher
Before the Darke Ladye.

"But now, my hearth is desolate
And on the Elm Street shore,
The brooms are still; my dusky mate
Shall beat the rug no more.

"Look on these cherubs, short but sweet;
How hangs each curly head!
Their eyes are dim with tears; they eat
The orphan's gingerbread.

"The while thou smok'st the costly weed,
(I see one on thy shelf)
Thou makest widows' hearts to bleed
Withholding of thy pelf.

"False caitiff! didst thou not declare
A check was on the way
From thy far boyhood's home, and swear
To pay me yesterday?

"Henceforth no soap thy sheets shall know,
No starch thy limp wrist-band,
And dirty towels in a row
Shall hang on thy wash-stand."

She 's gone, the door behind her slams;
Her feet descend the stair,
And I with sulphurous loud damns
Disturb the upper air.

She comes at morn and dewy eve,
She comes just after tea,
To stand beside my door and grieve,
That dismal Darke Ladye.

Thrice have I sent her small, small bill
For my dear Pa to see.
Some happy chance bring back his check
To quit the Darke Ladye.

YE LAYE OF YE WOODPECKORE.

PICUS ERYTHROCEPHALUS.

O WHITHER goest thou, pale studént
  Within the wood so fur?
Art on the chokesòme cherry bent?
  Dost seek the chestnut burr?

PALE STUDENT.

O it is not for the mellow chestnút
  That I so far am come,
Nor yet for puckery cherries, but
  For Cypripediúm.

A blossom hangs the choke-cherry
  And eke the chestnut burr,
And thou a silly fowl must be,
  Thou red-head wood-peckér.

PICUS ERYTHROCEPHALUS.

Turn back, turn back, thou pale studént,
  Nor in the forest go;
There lurks beneath his bosky tent
  The deadly mosquitó,

And there the wooden-chuck doth tread,
And from the oak-tree's top
The red, red squirrels on thy head
The frequent acorn drop.

PALE STUDENT.

The wooden-chuck is next of kin
Unto the wood-peckér:
I fear not thine ill-boding din,
And why should I fear her?

What though a score of acorns drop
And squirrels' fur be red!
'Tis not so ruddy as thy top —
So scarlet as thy head.

O rarely blooms the Cypripe-
diúm upon its stalk;
And like a torch it shines to me
Adown the dark wood-walk.

O joy to pluck it from the ground,
To view the purple sac,
To touch the sessile stigma's round —
And shall I then turn back?

PICUS ERYTHROCEPHALUS.

O black and shining is the bog
That feeds the sumptuous weed,
Nor stone is found nor bedded log
Where foot may well proceed.

Midmost it glimmers in the mire
Like Jack o' Lanthorn's spark,
Lighting with phosphorescent fire
The green umbrageous dark.

There while thy thirsty glances drink
The fair and baneful plant,
Thy shoon within the ooze shall sink
And eke thine either pant.

PALE STUDENT.

Give o'er, give o'er, thou wood-peckóre;
The bark upon the tree
Thou, at thy will, mayst peck and bore,
But peck and bore not me.

Full two long hours I 've searched about
And 'twould in sooth be rum,
If I should now go back without
The Cypripediúm.

PICUS ERYTHROCEPHALUS.

Farewell! Farewell! But this I tell
To thee, thou pale studént,
Ere dews have fell, thou 'lt rue it well
That woodward thou didst went:

Then whilst thou blows the drooping nose
And wip'st the pensive eye —
There where the sad *Symplocarpus fœtidus*
grows,
Then think — O think of I!

Loud flouted there that student wight
Swich warnynge for to hear;
"I scorn, old hen, thy threats of might,
And eke thine ill grammére.

"Go peck the lice (or green or red)
That swarm the bass-wood tree,
But wag no more thine addled head
Nor clack thy tongue at me."

The wood-peck turned to whet her beak,
The student heard her drum,
As through the wood he went to seek
The Cypripediúm.

Alas! and for that pale studént:
The evening bell did ring,
And down the walk the Freshmen went
Unto the prayer-meetíng;

Upon the fence loud rose the song,
The weak, weak tea was o'er—
Ha! who is he that sneaks along
Into South Middle's door?

The mud was on his shoon, and O!
The briar was in his thumb,
His staff was in his hand, but no—
No Cypripediúm.

A MERRY BALLAD OF THREE SOPHOMORES AND A TOLL-WOMAN.

It is a lordly sophomore,
The thirstiest one of three,
And he hath stopped at the toll-house door
All under the greenwood tree.

"Come hither, come hither, my merrymen both
And stand on either side:
What see ye on the toll-house wall
By the toll-house door so wide?"

They ha' lookit north — they ha' lookit south —
They ha' lookit aboon the sky:
Then up and spake the first merryman
And thus he made reply: —

"I ha' lookit north — I ha' lookit south —
I ha' lookit aboon the sky,
Yet I see naught on the toll-house wall
Or the toll-house door thereby."

Then up and spake the next merryman
With "Alack and woe betide!
For I've left my glass on the green, green grass
All by the burnie's side.

"So though I look north and though I look south,
And though I look straight before,
I see nothing at all on the toll-house wall
Nor yet on the toll-house door."

"Now shame! now shame! my merrymen both,
For see ye not written here
These words that tell of cakes to sell,
And eke of the small, small beer?

"'I have never a penny left in my purse—
Never a penny but three,
And one is brass and another is lead,
And another is white monéy.'

"But haud out your pouches o' gude green silk,
Or the skin of the red deer fleet,
And we'se tak' a draught of the wee sma' beer
And a bite of the seed-cake sweet."

He hadna rapped a rap, a rap,—
A rap but only three,

When out and came the toll-house dame,
Was a grisly wight to see.

Her cheek was yellow, her throat was lean,
Her eyes "baith blear and blin':"
No Soph hath half the beard, I ween,
That flourished on her chin.

"A boon! A boon! thou toll-woman,
A boon thous'e give to me,
For a thirstier soul than I am one
Lives not in Christianté.

"I 've swallowed the sassafras in the wood
And the dust on the king's highway,
And the sorrel that grows on the sandy bank,
Till my throat is as dry as hay."

"O seek ye of the red, red wine,
Or seek ye of the white,
To moisten your dainty clay withal,
And your whistles both shrill and slight?"

"We seek not of the red, red wine—
We seek not of the white:

We seek but a draught of the small, small beer,
Of the seed-cake only a bite."

"Then show me the red, red gold," quo' she,
"And show me the silver fine,
And show me a roll of the green, green back,
Or you 'se get no beer of mine."

Then up and spake the first merryman, —
By several saints he swore; —
"I have but an Index-check [1] in my pouch,
And the devil a penny more."

Then up and spake the next merryman —
"And I 've but a soda-ticket,
And a crumpled two-cent revenue stamp
With no gum-stickum to stick it."

"Aroint! — Aroint! ye beggarly loons,
From under my threshold tree!
What good to me is a revenue stamp
Or an Index-check perdy?

[1] Entitling the holder to one *Index to the Yale Literary Magazine*, prepared by "the busy L. H. B." These checks were thrown on the market in great numbers, and rapidly depreciated, causing a panic in the class only equalled by the similar distress produced by the famous "Finley Issue" in the class of '66.

"A soda ticket? A soda fiddle-
Stick! Pesky belly-wash!
Them folks as like it may swill sich fizz,
In their stomachs to rumble and swash:

"But as for me, I 'll stick to my cider,
And eke to the small, small beer,
And sell it to them as have money to pay;
But you — get out o' here!"

Then beerless to the dusty road
Turned each bold Sophomore,
While with a slam behind him closed
The heavy toll-house door.

IN LATIN PROSE RECITATION.

I LOVE the tongue of Cicero
In moderate quantities, you know;
But listening for an hour and more
To Latin prosings *is* a bore.
When Pinguis rises to recite —
O Erebus and Ancient Night!
Chaos is come again: Old Sleep
Along the benches 'gins to creep.
What shall I do while Pinguis stands
And tells of Balbus's lifted hands;
Of Titus Manlius, noble youth,
And that G. Washington of truth,
Caius, who fibbed not even in jest
(*Ne joco quidem*) — and the rest?
What shall I do to pass the time?
Try my hand at making rhyme?
This text-book's fly-leaves smooth and white
My pencil's sharpened point invite.
Help, muse, thou whose Mæonian brook
Meanders through the Balbus book:

Thou who with pure mnemonic fire
That noble quatrain did'st inspire;
"By *ut* translate infinitive
With ask, command, advise, and strive:
But NEVER be this rule forgot—
Put *ne* for *ut* when there 's a not."
Goddess, thou know'st I can't compose—
Not worth a rap—in Latin Prose.
(The exercises that I do
On the black-board get minus 2.
I saw the tutor with a frown
In his small book put this mark (x) down.)
So then—here goes in English verse:
It may be bad—it can't be worse.

A FISH STORY.

"It is said that the Greenland whale sometimes descends to the depth of a mile, but always comes up exhausted and blowing out blood, showing that the pressure has so acted upon the vessels as to cause them to discharge a portion of their contents into the lungs." — *Olmsted's Natural Philosophy.*

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of in your philosophy." — *Hamlet*

A WHALE of great porosity
And small specific gravity,
Dived down with much velocity
Beneath the sea's concavity.

But soon the weight of water
Squeezed in his fat immensity,
Which varied — as it ought to —
Inversely as his density.

It would have moved to pity
An Ogre or a Hessian,
To see poor Spermaceti
Thus suffering compression.

The while he lay a-roaring
  In agonies gigantic,
The lamp-oil out came pouring
  And greased the wide Atlantic.

(Would we 'd been in the Navy,
  And cruising there! Imagine us
All in a sea of gravy,
  With billow oleaginous!)

At length old million-pounder,
  Low on a bed of coral,
Gave his last dying flounder,
  Whereto I pen this moral.

MORAL.

O let this tale dramatic
  Anent this whale Norwegian,
And pressures hydrostatic
  Warn you, my young collegian,

That down-compelling forces
  Increase as you get deeper;
The lower down your course is,
  The upward path 's the steeper.

SCHOOLMASTER DICK.

——"Dic per omnes
Te deos oro."

Horace, Book I., Ode 8.

SCHOOLMASTER Dick
Was choleric.
One morning as he lay in bed,
A noisy fly about his head
Made humming, —
Now coming,
Now going. Ah! poor Dick!
How the beast's claws did stick
To thy wide nose.
Red as a rose
With bumming!

At length he rose and poised full high
His fist, and aimed it at the fly,
Which, like Giles Scroggins' father's ghost,
Was standing tall on *the* bed-post.
Fierce he broke forth: "Cæruleo-flagon!
Purpureal-flask! You cursed bug-dragon!

By Beelzebub! I will you throttle,
You devil of a big blue-bottle!"
Wild he struck out, his wrath to wreak:
O grief! the wily brute did sneak
All deftly out betwixt his hand
And that fell wood where it did land.

Now, Richard, rub thy knuckles sore,
And smite at flies on posts no more.

THE RESTLESSNESS OF THE FIG-HORSE.

A METROPOLITAN ODE — AFTER THE HEMANS OF AMERICA.[1]

O FIG-HORSE by the Cooper Institute,
Why dost thou, like a wild, unlassoed brute,
Start and endanger thy good master's fruit?

Behold yon peanut-horse, who doth not vary
His pose, nor shake his maneless head contráry;
But stands as statue-like and stationary,

As that bronze steed in Union Square, whereon
Rampeth the dignified G. Washington
Waving benignant benediction.

Peace, aged steed! The bit thou canst not champ
With toothless gums; thou art too old to ramp:
To arch thy ancient neck would give the cramp.

[1] *Vide* "Ode to a Shred of Linen," commencing, "O shred, etc."

Say, dost thou scorn to vend the humble pie,
Or draw the car "where sweets compacted lie?"
For shame! Ποποι, proud charger! Fie, O fie!

Perchance pegasian instincts in thy blood
Do cause thee thus to paw the pavement mud:—
Then spread thy wings above the ocean sud.

So am *I* sick of these confections sweet:
Blow, wuthering winds; November rain-floods beat;
Welcome, loud northers and the winter's sleet!

THE UNPSYCHOLOGICAL BABY.

AFTER DR. HOLLAND.

WHO can tell what the baby thinks
When its warm and sugared pap it drinks,
Gurgles and sprawls and stares and blinks,
Works its fingers and eke its toes,
While mamma wipes its small snub nose;
Gums on its ring and drules on its bib
And falls on its head from the open crib;
Raises a bump on its cartilage bald
And goes to sleep when enough it has squalled?

THRENODY ON THREE WORTHY "CHARACTERS."

Dim is my damp eye
For thee, O Sampi:
Lo! here I drop a
Tear for Koppa;
Gone, too, art thou,
Departed Vau;
(Ah! letter sweet,
Now obsolete.)
Ye-one-two-three
All vanished be,
Swallowed by Time's much-gulping sea.
Unfortunate triad,
Lost like the Pleiad,
Leaving the seven
Lorn in Night's heaven.

F.

But thou, Digamma —
Chiefly for thee

We wail and clamour
In threnody.
Old Hell, thy gammer,
Swallowed thee whole;
Yet still thy soul
Doth haunt this grammar —
A ghostly V
For whom Prof. Hadley
Moaneth madly
And in each dark hiatus sadly
Listens for thee.

PRIDE GOETH BEFORE A FALL.

Oh glee!
How he
Across the street doth slip
And on the curb-stone cut his cursed lip!
Erstwhiles
Slow smiles
Of much contempt there sat,
The while his eyes laughed scorn at my good hat.
Excellent hat—
O hat most fat,
Now feed thy hatred on him, as he lies
Low in the gutter, while the laughter dies
Away from lips and out of mud-splashed eyes.

A HOLIDAY ECLOGUE.

ABOVE.

First Mason:

Tink-a-link! Tink-a-link! Hear the trowels ring;
Feel the merry breezes make the scaffold swing;
See the skimming swallow brush us with her wing:—
Go it with your hammers, boys; time us while we sing.

BELOW.

First Student:

See the yellow sparkle of the Neckar in the glass,
And through the cedar branches sparkles blue the sea;
Hear the sweet piano — hear the German lass
Sing *Freut' euch des Lebens* — Oh! "I love, I love the free!"

Second Student:

I like the canary better;
Look, how he swells his throttle!
He gurgles like musical water
That dances and sings in a bottle.

ABOVE.

Second Mason:

D'ye mind the students down in the grove
Drinking their wine and beer?
That's an easy life they lead.

First Mason:

So do we up here
When the weathercock points west
And the look-off's clear.

Third Mason:

House-top Jim's the boy for work!

First Mason:

True for you, my dear.
(*Whistles "The Girl I Left Behind me."*)

BELOW.

First Student:

See the Dutchmen on those settees:
Is n't it like the Rhine?
And the old church-tower up over the trees —
Kellner! Noch ein Stein!

Third Student:

I'd like to work with those masons there
Half way up the sky.
The air is sweet where the pigeons build,
And the world is all in their eye.

Second Student:

But "Love is of the valley:" the Gretchen and the Kellner
Haunt the cheerful levels of the lower story.
Glory in the garret — comfort in the cellar:
I will keep the comfort — you may take the glory.

ABOVE.

First Mason:

Look up at the pointers: they 're drawing close together;
'T is here we get the earliest news of sun, and moon, and weather;
We can hear time's pulse a-ticking, with the whistling weathercock.
Drop your mortar-boards, my lads, it's coming twelve o'clock.

Third Mason:

Oh! it 's hungry that I am with working in the wind,
But there 's a shawl and bonnet — below there: do you mind?
It 's Molly with the dinner-pail: she 's coming in the door.
Faith, my belly thinks my throat is cut this half an hour and more.

(*The church clock strikes the noon.*)

A SHADES.

A SHADES there is unknown to fame,
  A shades indeed that very few know,
And fewer still can spell the name
  That decks its windows — Madame Grunot.

(I know a quote here rather pat:
  Perhaps it would n't come amiss,
By Jove, I 'll sling it! here goes: *Stat* —
  Stat umbra magni nominis.)

What 's in a name? The rose *is* sweet,
  Its bower is snug, albeit shady;
The ale is nice, the room is neat,
  And neater still the nice Old Lady.

If Bacchus' self should step in here,
  He 'd hardly miss the rosy Hebe
While smiling Madame pours his beer,
  Or honest Tom or pretty Phebe.

He 'd hardly miss his nectar-cup;
I 'll bet a fig that every night he
Would here on savory rabbits sup,
And swig his ale, *sub arta vite.*

AD IULUM ANTONIUM.

HORACE'S ODES: LIBER IV. CARMEN II.

Tony, for me to write an ode,
And spout it from a staging
Would be to trust in waxen wings,[1]
Or, when the winds are raging,
To pull outside the Light-house Point
In Charlie's paper wherry
(Six inches and a half across;)
'T would be imprudent — very!

"Weak-winged is song;" Why don't you get
Some muse with pinions tougher? —
Some epic dominie or some
Didactic-blank-verse buffer,
Complacent, fat, in white cravat,
Who, in mid-climax soaring,
Will pause to hear his audience cheer
And kick upon the flooring.

[1] "Ceratis ope Dædalea
Nititur pennis."

Get some prize-poet who can write
A dozen different metres.
There 's Finch; there 's Duffield — Hollister
Who does our best Phi Betas;
There 's Edward Sill — he slings a quill
Quite filthy (perhaps *stylus*
Would sound more classical than quill;)
There 's Rev. Crescentius Nilus;—

That swelling Nile[1] whose annual flood
The "Courant" always mentions,
Enriching drear alumni feeds
And Delta Phi conventions.
I name a laureate here and there;
You 'll doubtless think of others.
Who did the anniversary
(No joke on *verse*) at Brothers?

These swans[2] of song I often see
Early some autumn morning
Fly over in the frosty sky;
Faint sounds their leader's warning.

[1] "Monte decurrens velut amnis, imbres
Quem super notas aluere ripas."
[2] "Multa Dircæum levat aura cycnum."

Southward they seek the Chesapeake,
To winter homes returning,
Above the maple-forests red
And brushwood swamps a-burning.

But I, a bee[1] that shuns the wind,
By East Rock's sheltered bases
Crawl into spurs of columbines
In warm and sunny places,
Humming in slender, earthy strain
Of little cells I 'm building
At home, and how my jacket brown
Has one small stripe of gilding.

Perchance on some Red Letter night
When snow was softly heaping
Outside upon the window-sill,
And, o'er our senses creeping,
The sleepy malt, the grate-fire's glow
That tinged our pipe smoke rosy
As evening clouds, had made us feel
Particularly cosy,

I 've taken from my pocket's depths
A torn and crumpled paper

[1] " Ego apis Matinæ," etc.

Whereon were traced some idle rhymes,
An idler brain's light vapor;
And if to these the Letters Red
Listened with kind indulgence,[1]
We 'll lay it to that genial malt
And fire-light's soft effulgence.

But when in gilt-edged album-book
I 'm asked to write a sonnet,
I sadly shake my head and say
"Dear Miss, I am not on it."
And when Dick reads me his new pome
In twenty cantos, then ah!
My little chirping muse descries
How *tenuis* is her *penna*.

[1] "Si quid loquar audiendum," etc.

A MEMORY.

I came across the marsh to-night,
And though the wind was cold,
I stayed a moment on the bridge
To note the paly gold

That lingered on the darkening bay;
The creek which ran below
Was frozen dumb; the dreary flats
Were overspread with snow.

The college bell began to ring,
And as the north wind blew
Its distant janglings out to sea,
I thought, dear Friend, of you;

And how one warm September day,
While yet the woods were green,
We strayed across the happy hills
And this wide marsh between.

The hay-stacks dotted here and there
The water-meadows wide:
The level lines of sluices black
Were filling with the tide.

Then this salt stream, now winter-bound,
Fled softly through the sedge,
Retreating from the sparkling Sound;
And there along its edge

We strolled, and marked the far-off sloops,
And watched the cattle graze.
O'erhead the swallows rushed in troops,
While bright with purple haze,

West Rock looked down the winding plain —
Ah! this was long ago;
The summer's gone, and you are gone,
As everything must go.

PRESENTATION: '68 AND '69.

Their songs are done, their forms are gone,
  And Time for us hath turned the glass:
We heed not, as we take their seats,
  How downward swift the red sands pass.

We heed not how the cloud comes on
  That shadows all the sunny land —
The day when heart from heart must part
  And clinging hand unlink from hand.

What shall that Dies Iræ give
  In place of that it takes away:
How fill the time we have to live
  While youth treads downward to decay?

Good-by, true friend; Good-by, old Yale;
  Good-by, each dear familiar spot;
Good-by, sweet season of our youth —
  "The golden, happy, unforgot."

IVY ODE.

CLASS DAY, 1869.

WHEN we are gone from sight and mind,
Leaving no token here behind
To speak for us in this loved scene,
O, Ivy, keep our memory green;
And trace in thy soft, leafy line,
The dear old name of Sixty-nine.

When youth and Yale are far away,
And these young heads are growing gray,
We 'll think, how on this cold stone wall
Our Ivy climbeth strong and tall;
And then our hearts, like thee, shall grow
The greener for the winter snow.

Farewell! Farewell! A leaf from thee
In after years a charm shall be
To start the tear in eyes long dry;
To stir the drowsy memory
With sad, sweet thoughts of Auld Lang Syne,
And friends we loved in Sixty-nine.

THE NEW YALE.

All day we hear the chisels ring,
The windlass creak, the masons sing;
With every brightening moon there falls
A longer shadow from the walls.
We hope these rising halls may bring
Some new event — some wished-for thing.
We look to see that not alone
Of "mellow brick-work" or of stone,
But reared by wisdom's magic wands
Invisible, not made with hands,
Yet stronger than the trowel builds,
Deep-laid by toiling scholar-guilds,
Her corner-stone's free-masonry
As broad as this brave century,
Our new, regenerate Yale shall be —
Our Yankee university.
O let her widened portals stand
All opening on the future's land;
Her pointed windows one by one
Steal color from the setting sun;

Her gables and her belfries high,
Her generous chimney-stacks whereby
The college doves shall build and fly,
Front only toward the western sky;
And far above her tall elm trees
The bright vanes point the western breeze!
We care not that the dawn should throw
Its gilding on our portico;
But rather that our natal star,
Bright Hesper, in the twilight far
Should beckon toward the imperial West
Which he, our Berkeley, loved the best;
Whereto, his mighty line doth say,
"The course of empire takes its way."
For in the groves of that young land
A lordly school his wisdom planned
To teach new knowledge to new men,
Fresh sciences undreamed of then.
She comes — had come unknown before,
Though not on "vext Bermoothe's" shore.
Yet will she not her prophet fail —
The new — the old — the same dear Yale.

TRIENNIAL POME.

FYTTE THE FIRST.

THE other evening, — just when tea is o'er
And ambulances crowd the Commons door —
When the heat gets a trifle less intense
And singing sounds the nicest on the fence, —
At shirt-sleeve time, when the first pipe is lit
And cheerful June-bugs round the ceiling flit,
I sat with palm-leaf fan and slippered feet
"Enlumining with rhethoricke swete"
(That's Chaucer) a small portion of the gloom
That broods within my grim tutorial room;
(I always cram my lessons up ahead
Because, by spirit of enquiry led,
With wily question Freshmen sometimes stick
Their Tutor in Eng. Lit. and Rhetorick)
Thus sitting, wrapped in Rhetorick and smoke,
I heard somebody tapping at my oak.
Thought I unto myself: "Now who the deuce is
That at my door? — Some Freshman wants ex-
cuses;

And yet, methinks, that is no Freshman tap;
There 's something bold though friendly in that
rap:
Such echoes waken in these ears of mine
The wooden knuckles of old Sixty-Nine."
"Come in," I said: slow swung the ponderous door
And Phlander stood before me on the floor.

FYTTE THE SECOND.

Stern was his brow and serious as of yore
But somewhat bushier were the sides he wore.
Divinity sat throned within his eye —
New Haven Orthodox Divinity;
Not such as holdeth sway where MANUS stands
Swinging the censer in his jeweled hands
Or sings antiphonals with solemn chant,
Snuffing the candles of the covenant.
He seemed an angel sent to summon me
To some high mission — or, perhaps, to tea:
So looks — so frowns that messenger of doom
Who beckons to the tea-fight's learned gloom.
"Fear not," he said, — "fear not, I am not come
To dun you for our Megatherium;
The money that your secretary begs,
To buy that aged reptile's ribs and legs,
Is scarce enough as yet to furnish plast-
Er for the *monstrum horrendum informe's* cast.

Yet some remote posterity may see 'em
Ranged proudly in the Peabody Museum."

FYTTE THE THIRD.

"It is not for the fossil that I call,"
Said Phlander, "but for the Triennial.
We 're getting very near to the Class Supper,
There 's no Class Cup — in fact there 's no class cupper.
The unfilial babe declineth to appear,
Thus bringing down in sorrow to his beer
His father's hundred and fifteen gray heads.
What 's to be done? — There 'll be the toasts and spreads,
But then we want some kind of fluff or foam,
And so — and so — you 've got to do a pome."
"Phlander," said I, "The class of Sixty-Nine
Is a sensible class: we love our beer and wine,
We like our smear, our smoke, our jolly chorus,
But pomes and speeches and all that sort bore us.
Don't I remember once in Delta Phi
When *Texican* and *Beverly* and I
Tried to get up some littry exercises?
The chairman raps, the essayist arises
With bulky manuscript and neat cravat
When suddenly loud cries of 'Fat up! Fat!

Why don't you fat up on the Jimmy's trick?'
'Hold your yawp, Cammy,' 'Who dug you up?' etc.
Within his frame lamented Eels grows red
And frescoed Clio hangs her blushing head."

FYTTE THE FOURTH.

"Besides, my Phlander, now you talk of fluff,
The last three years I've dealt in sterner stuff.
Indeed I've ceased to build the lofty line
And woo the unwilling muse since Sixty-Nine.
Yet Phlander," said I, "were there one[1] whose fires
The bull-dog kindles and John Roach inspires,
Well skilled in swift velocipedic race
Or rhyming dictionary's page to trace,
He were the bard to do Triennial pomes
And rag therein J. Saxe and Dr. Holmes.
Alas! no bull-dog licks his ligneous hands;
He roams in rude and licoriceless lands
Where never yet 'Four Years at Yale' hath shed
Its rays, and e'en the 'Index' is unread."

FYTTE THE FIFTH.

Now that I've told you how I came to be
Dragged into this thing by your committée,

[1] "The Graduate of '69."

I 'll say the few words that I have to say
And say them in the plain prosaic way.
To us at Alma Mater's apron-string
Not much of change the quiet seasons bring.
The elm-leaf buds and spreads and yellowing falls :
New ivies stretch their green threads up the walls ;
But now and then we hear how Tom has sped,
That Dick is married and that Harry's dead,
That Jack is raising cane on the Equator
And Bob is running for the "Legislatur."
Our academic cobwebs gather dust,
Perhaps our minds contract a little rust
And we home-keepers hardly notice how
The wrinkles thicken in our Mother's brow.
Now when we shake your hands upon the fence
To me, at least, there comes as yet no sense
Of change ; once more, as in the bright September weather,
Some long vacation's close brings us together.
But you who 've wandered doubtless find the trace
Of alteration in our Mother's face.
All change is sad — yes, sad is ever growth ;
It steals away some portion from our youth.

The college pump 's not where it used to be;
You can't get used to Farnam and Durfee;
Old land-marks fail: just in the college close
Where Boreal Joseph's modest mansion rose,—
Where when the meteoric fireworks came
Their light was dimmed by less celestial flame,—
There now a desert of wild oats doth spread.
Our ivy, too, can hardly yet be said
To "clothe" the wall: when last I chanced to pass
One bright green leaf looked bravely thro' the grass.
Ah well! these younger years so lightly fly
We scarcely hear their wings; but by and by
More precious and more precious still shall be
These meetings — rests and breathing-spots where we
May pause as up these stony hills of time,
Whose summits pave eternity, we climb
And turn our eyes from mists and clouds and snow
Back to Youth's valley lying fair below.
Forever there the tender light of dawn
Striped with long shadows trembles on the lawn;
The sky forever breezy, far and blue;
The green woods freshened with perennial dew;
The meadow-lark's brief sweetly-whistled tune
Fills the deep valley with the voice of June.

POETICAL EPISTLE TO J. HORNE.

I DON'T much like this "Love as a Law;"[1]
  Leastwise, the title's stupid
And mixes things: who ever saw,
  For instance, "Coke on Cupid"?

Suppose you mention to Prof. P.,
  That when we buy our next book,
You think "Laus Veneris" would be
  A very jolly text-book.

It treats of Laus and treats of Love;
  And though it does n't say
That love is law and laws are love,
  Well — that 's C. Swinburne's way.

[1] *The Law of Love and Love as a Law*, by President Mark Hopkins.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

SPIRIT LAKE.

It lies among the western hills
  In purple distance far away,
Fed by the gush of mountain rills
  Within the portals of the day.

Basking in summer stillness deep,
  Among the dim blue hills it gleams
Forever in a charméd sleep,
  Lulled by the flow of sounding streams.

At evening on the dusky wold
  When winds from out the sunset blow,
And in the west the waves of gold
  Suffuse the sky with liquid glow;

While in the wide extended blush
  I mark the disk of one bright star,
Tinged with a faint unearthly flush
  It shines like Heaven's gate ajar.

And when I in the midnight wake
  And through my windows see the moon,
And hear the gusty curtain shake
  And the low summer night wind's tune;

That lonely lake my spirit laves
  As in a vague and wandering dream,
And, listening to the wash of waves,
  Far on the middle mere I seem.

I see the moon-bathed waters wide;
  I hear the dip of spectral oars,
Strange echoes on the mountain side,
  Uncertain whispers on the shores.

But on thy margin, haunted pool,
  Enchantment holds her wizard throne:
Above thy spell-bound surface cool
  A mystic silence broods alone.

Across thy bosom glides no sail;
  No voice of man disturbs thy sleep;
Nor ever comes intruding gale
  To stir thy tranquil water deep.

The traveler on the lonely hill
  When dim-eyed twilight gathers round

And the brown air is moist and still,
  Hears through the dusk a solemn sound.

As of the ringing of sweet bells
  Within the distant mountain's breast,
And oft on rainless nights he tells
  Of lightning flashes in the west.

The wild deer from the forest glade
  Are gone; but still their ghosts may slake
Their thirst, where none e'er dips the blade
  In thy dark wave, O Spirit Lake.

THE RISE OF APHRODITE.

Lo one who sails upon the moonless deep
Skirting the land, and hears th' unceasing roar
Of plunging billows and the distant sweep
Of wind-tossed surges on the winding shore
And the remote, low voices of the waves
Where all night long the broken water raves
And bellows through reëchoing ocean caves.

No light upon the main but starlight dim
And through the solemn night no other sound
Upon the sea breeze, save that ancient hymn
The wind doth breathe through every stop and round
Of the great sea — the monotone which swells
Eternal as the surfy sigh that dwells
Within the galleries of ocean shells.

But now from out the horizon wild and dark
Stealeth a strain — a dream of melody,
As slowly wafted comes a white sailed bark
With noise of flutes across the listening sea,

Bearing to Paphos, island of all flowers,
Form-born Idalia; led by dancing hours
And oared by tritons from their coral bowers:

With tinkling harps and choral strains divine
Charming to sleep the billows in its way:
Lit up with soft celestial lamps that shine
Where round the prow the black haired Nereids play;
And shedding through the startled realms of night
A lambent, flushing, shifting radiance bright,—
A far extended haze of amber light:

And borne by sea-winds o'er the midnight deep
With rosy gleam and music breathing low,
Glides like a dream across the ocean's sleep
Casting on the black waves a moment's glow;
Then passing into darkness leaves once more
The sweeping surges and the billows' roar
And shimmering starlight lonelier than before.

WATER LILIES AT SUNSET.

MINE eyes have seen when once at sunset hour,
White lily flocks that edged a lonely lake
All rose and sank upon the lifting swell
That swayed their long stems lazily, and lapped
Their floating pads and stirred among the leaves.
And when the sun from western gates of day
Poured colored flames, they, kissed to ruddy shame,
So blushed through snowy petals, that they glowed
Like roses morning-blown in dewy bowers,
When garden-walks lie dark with early shade.
That so their perfumed chalices were brimmed
With liquid glory till they overflowed
And spilled rich lights and purple shadows out,
That splashed the pool with gold, and stained its waves
In tints of violet and ruby blooms.
But when the flashing gem that lit the day
Dropped in its far blue casket of the hills,
The rainbow paintings faded from the mere,
The wine-dark shades grew black, the gilding dimmed,

While paling slow through tender amber hues,
The crimsoned lilies blanched to coldest white,
And wanly shivered in the evening breeze.
When twilight closed — when earliest dew-drops fell
All frosty-chill deep down their golden hearts,
They shrank at that still touch, as maidens shrink,
When love's first footstep frights with sweet alarms
The untrod wildness of their virgin breasts;
Then shut their ivory cups, and dipping low
Their folded beauties in the gloomy wave,
They nodded drowsily and heaved in sleep.
But sweeter far than summer dreams at dawn,
Their mingled breaths from out the darkness stole,
Across the silent lake, the winding shores,
The shadowy hills that rose in lawny slopes,
The marsh among whose reeds the wild fowl screamed,
And dusky woodlands where the night came down.

ANACREONTIC.

I WOULD not be
A voyager on the windy seas:
More sweet to me
This bank where crickets chirp and bees
Buzz drowsy sunshine minstrelsies.

I would not bide
On lonely heights where shepherds dwell.
At twilight tide
The sounds that from the valley swell,
Soft breathing flute and herdsman's bell,

Are sweeter far
Than music of cold mountain rills.
The evening star
Wakes love and song below, but chills
With mist and breeze the gloomy hills.

I would not woo
Some storm-browed Juno queenly fair.
Soft eyes of blue

And sudden blushes unaware
Do net my heart in silken snare.

I do not love
The eyrie, but low woodland nest
Of cushat dove:
Not wind but calm; not toil but rest,
And sleep in grassy meadow's breast.

A VACATION REVERIE.

HERE in my airy citadel
I hear the drowsy village bell
Across the valley slowly tell
The hours of afternoon.
Supine upon the turf I lie
And, as the ragged clouds drift by,
Adown deep openings in the sky
I spy the vapory moon.

Below, a sleepy summer view,
The near hills green, the far hills blue,
With dim perspectives opening through —
A wondrous picture book.
Thus lying lapped in golden ease
'Mong grasshoppers and mountain bees,
Life's all-sufficient aims are these, —
To listen and to look.

BUMBLE BEE.

As I lay yonder in tall grass
A drunken bumble-bee went past
Delirious with honey toddy.
The golden sash about his body
Scarce keep it in his swollen belly
Distent with honey-suckle jelly.
Rose liquor and the sweet pea wine
Had filled his soul with song divine;
Deep had he drunk the warm night through:
His hairy thighs were wet with dew.
Full many an antic he had played
While the world went round through sleep and shade.
Oft had he lit with thirsty lip
Some flower-cup's nectared sweets to sip,
When on smooth petals he would slip
Or over tangled stamens trip,
And headlong in the pollen rolled,
Crawl out quite dusted o'er with gold.
Or else his heavy feet would stumble

Against some bud and down he 'd tumble
Amongst the grass; there lie and grumble
In low, soft bass — poor maudlin bumble!
With tipsy hum on sleepy wing
He buzzed a glee — a bacchic thing
Which, wandering strangely in the moon,
He learned from grigs that sing in June,
Unknown to sober bees who dwell
Through the dark hours in waxen cell.
When south wind floated him away
The music of the summer day
Lost something: sure it was a pain
To miss that dainty star-light strain.

AD FONTEM BANDUSIÆ.

HORACE: ODES: LIBER III. CARMEN XIII.

Bandusian spring — thou crystal well —
  Worthy sweet wine with many a flower,
  To-morrow shalt thou have for dower
A kid, whose brow begins to swell

With budding horns that playful seem
  To threaten love and war: in vain:
  The wanton flock's young shoot must stain
With his red blood thine icy stream.

Thy depths the hot midsummer shine
  Knows not to reach: sweet coolness thou
  To bullocks weary of the plow
Dost offer, and to wandering kine.

Thou too shalt be a storied well,
  When of the hollow, rocky steep
  From which thy talking waters leap
Under the holms, my lute shall tell.

AD MINISTRUM.

HORACE : ODES : LIBER I. CARMEN XXXVIII.

I LIKE not, boy, the Persians' state!
Their chaplets, tied with bark, I hate!
  Thou need'st not search for me
In sunny spots behind the hill,
Where the last roses linger still.
  I do not ask of thee

The cunning art that interweaves
Rose crowns with modest myrtle leaves;
  Plain myrtle's not too fine,
Thy brow, my serving lad, to wreathe,
Nor mine when drinking underneath
  My close embowering vine.

SIXPENCE FOR A KISS.

STRANGER maiden, when you waken,
If you miss
So much sweet as may be taken
In a kiss,
What's a mouthful musk or civet?
Sure you would not grudge to give it;
(In your dream
You did seem
Smiling *yes* though blushing *nay*).

Yet I would not choose to thieve it,
Like the bee
Who sippeth free;
Therefore, sweet-heart, here is pay.

PSYCHE.

At evening in the port she lay,
A lifeless block with canvas furled;
But silently at peep of day
Spread her white wings and skimmed away
And, rosy in the dawn's first ray,
Sunk down behind the rounding world.

So hast thou vanished from our side,
Dear bark, that from some far, bright strand
Anchored a while on life's dull tide;
Then, lifting spirit pinions wide,
In Heaven's own orient glorified,
Steered outward seeking Holy Land.

BETWEEN THE FLOWERS.

An open door and door-steps wide,
With pillared vines on either side,
And terraced flowers, stair over stair,
Standing in pots of earthenware
Where stiff processions filed around —
Black on the smooth, sienna ground.
Tubers and bulbs now blossomed there
Which, in the moisty hot-house air,
Lay winter long in patient rows,
Glassed snugly in from Christmas snows :
Tube-roses, with white, waxy gems
In bunches on their reed-like stems ;
Their fragrance forced by art too soon
To mingle with the sweets of June.
(So breathes the thin blue smoke, that steals
From ashes of the gilt pastilles,
Burnt slowly, as the brazier swings,
In dim saloons of eastern kings.)
I saw the calla's arching cup
With yellow spadix standing up,

Its liquid scents to stir and mix —
The goldenest of toddy-sticks ;
Roses and purple fuchsia drops ;
Camellias, which the gardener crops
To make the sickening wreaths that lie
On coffins when our loved ones die.
These all and many more were there ;
Monsters and *grandifloras* rare,
With tropical broad leaves, grown rank
Drinking the waters of the tank
Wherein the lotus-lilies bathe ;
All curious forms of spur and spathe,
Pitcher and sac and cactus-thorn,
There in the fresh New England morn.
But where the sun came colored through
Translucent petals wet with dew,
The interspace was carpeted
With oriel lights and nodes of red,
Orange and blue and violet,
That wove strange figures, as they met,
Of airier tissue, brighter blooms
Than tumble from the Persian looms.
So at the pontiffs' feasts, they tell,
From the board's edge the goblet fell,
Spilled from its throat the purple tide
And stained the pavement far and wide.

Such steps wise Sheba trod upon
Up to the throne of Solomon;
So bright the angel-crowded steep
Which Israel's vision scaled in sleep.
What one is she whose feet shall dare
Tread that illuminated stair?
Like Sheba, queen; like angels, fair?
Oh listen! In the morning air
The blossoms all are hanging still—
The queen is standing on the sill.
No Sheba she; her virgin zone
Proclaims her royalty alone:
(Such royalty the lions own.)
Yet all too cheap the patterned stone
That paves kings' palaces, to feel
The pressure of her gaiter's heel.
The girlish grace that lit her face
Made sunshine in a dusky place—
The old silk hood, demure and quaint,
Wherein she seemed an altar-saint
Fresh-tinted, though in setting old
Of dingy carving and tarnished gold;
Her eyes, the candles in that shrine,
Making Madonna's face to shine
Lingering I passed, but evermore
Abide with me the open door,

The doorsteps wide, the flowers that stand
In brilliant ranks on either hand,
The two white pillars and the vine
Of bitter-sweet and lush woodbine,
And — from my weary paths as far
As Sheba or the angels are —
Between, upon the wooden sill,
Thou, Queen of Hearts, art standing still.

ON A MINIATURE.

THINE old-world eyes — each one a violet
  Big as the baby rose that is thy mouth —
Set me a dreaming. Have our eyes not met
  In childhood — in a garden of the South?

Thy lips are trembling with a song of France,
  My cousin, and thine eyes are dimly sweet;
'Wildered with reading in an old romance
  All afternoon upon the garden seat.

The summer wind read with thee, and the bees
  That on the sunny pages loved to crawl:
A skipping reader was the impatient breeze,
  And turned the leaves, but the slow bees read
    all.

And now thy foot descends the terrace stair:
  I hear the rustle of thy silk attire;
I breathe the musky odors of thy hair
  And airs that from thy painted fan respire.

Idly thou pausest in the shady walk,
  Thine ear attentive to the fountain's fall:
Thou mark'st the flower-de-luce sway on her stalk,
  The speckled vergalieus ripening on the wall.

Thou hast the feature of my mother's race,
  The gilded comb she wore, her smile, her eye:
The blood that flushes softly in thy face
  Crawls through my veins beneath this northern
    sky.

As one disherited, though next of kin,
  Who lingers at the barred ancestral gate,
And sadly sees the happy heir within
  Stroll careless through his forfeited estate;

Even so I watch thy southern eyes, Lisette,
  Lady of my lost paradise and heir
Of summer days that were my birthright. Yet
  Beauty like thine makes usurpation fair.

IM SCHWARZWALD.

THE winter sunset, red upon the snow,
Lights up the narrow way that I should go;
Winding o'er bare white hilltops, whereon lie
Dark churches and the holy evening sky.
That path would lead me deep into the west,
Even to the feet of her I love the best.

But this scarce broken track in which I stand
Runs east, up through the tan-woods' midnight land;
Where now the newly risen moon doth throw
The shadows of long stems across the snow.
This path would take me to the Jäger's Tree
Where stands the Swabian girl and waits for me.

Her eyes are blacker than the woods at night
And witching as the moon's uncertain light;
And there are tones in that low voice of hers
Caught from the wind among the Schwarzwald firs,
And from the Gutach's echoing waters, when
Still evening listens in the Forsthaus glen.

I must — I must! Thou wilt forgive me, sweet;
My heart flies west but eastward move my feet;
The mad moon brightens as the sunset dies,
And yonder hexie draws me with her eyes.
Ruck, ruck an meine grüne Seit' she sings
And with her arms the frozen trunk enrings,

And lays upon its bark her little face.
How canst thou be so dead in her embrace —
So cold against her kisses, happy tree?
Thou hast no love beyond the western sea.
Methinks that at the lightest touch of her
Thy wooden trunk should tremble, thy boughs stir:

But at the pressure of her tender form
Thy inmost pith should feel her and grow warm:
The torpid sap should race along the vein;
The resinous buds should swell, and once again
Fresh needles shoot, as though the breeze of spring
Already through the woods came whispering.

KATY DID.

In a windy tree-top sitting,
Singing at the fall of dew,
Katy watched the bats a-flitting,
While the twilight's curtains drew
Closer round her; till she only
Saw the branches and the sky —
Rocking late and rocking lonely,
Anchored on the darkness high.
And the song that she was singing,
In the windy tree-tops swinging,
Was *under the tree, under the tree*
The fox is digging a pit for me.

When the early stars were sparkling
Overhead, and down below
Fireflies twinkled, through the darkling
Thickets she heard footsteps go —
Voice of her false lover speaking,
Laughing to his sweetheart new: —
"Half my heart for thee I'm breaking:
Did not Katy love me true?"

Then no longer she was singing,
But through all the wood kept ringing—
Katy did, Katy did, Katy did love thee
And the fox is digging a grave for me.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

HERE while I read the light forsakes the pane;
  Metempsychosis of the twilight gray —
Into green aisles of Epping or Ardenne
  The level lines of print stretch far away.

The book-leaves whisper like the forest-leaves;
  A smell of ancient woods, a breeze of morn,
A breath of violets from the mossy paths,
  And hark! the voice of hounds — the royal horn,

Which, muffled in the ferny coverts deep,
  Utters the three sweet notes that sound recall;
As, riding two by two between the oaks,
  Come on the paladins and ladies all.

The court will rest from chase in this smooth glade
  That slopes to meet yon little rushy stream,
Where in the shallows nod the arrow-heads,
  And the blue flower-de-luce's banners gleam.

The gamekeepers are coupling of the hounds;
The pages hang bright scarfs upon the boughs;
The new-slain quarry lies upon the turf
Whereon but now he with the herd did browse.

The silk pavilion shines among the trees;
The mighty pasties and the flagons strong
Give cheer to the dear heart of many a knight,
And many a dame whose beauty lives in song.

Meanwhile a staging improvised and rude
Rises, whereon the masquers and the mines
Play for their sport a pleasant interlude,
Fantastic, gallant, pointing at the times.

Their green-room is the wide midsummer wood;
Down some far-winding gallery the deer—
The dappled dead-head of that sylvan show—
Starts as the distant ranting strikes his ear.

They use no traverses nor painted screen
To help along their naked, out-door wit:
(Only the forest lends its leafy scene)
Yet wonderfully well they please the pit.

The plaudits echo through the wide parquet
Where the fair audience upon the grass,

Each knight beside his lady-love, is set,
  While overhead the merry winds do pass.

The little river murmurs in its reeds,
  And somewhere in the verdurous solitude
The wood-thrush drops a cool contralto note,
  An orchestra well-tuned unto their mood.

As runs the play so runs the afternoon;
  The curtain and the sun fall side by side;
The epilogue is spoke, the twilight come;
  Then homeward through the darkening glades
    they ride.

NARCISSUS.

WHERE the black hemlock slants athwart the stream
He came to bathe; the sun's pursuing beam
Laid a warm hand upon him, as he stood
Naked, while noonday silence filled the wood.
Holding the boughs o'erhead, with cautious foot
He felt his way along the mossy root
That edged the brimming pool; then paused and dreamed.
Half like a dryad of the tree he seemed,
Half like the naiad of the stream below,
Suspended there between the water's flow
And the green tree-top world; the love-sick air
Coaxing with softest touch his body fair
A little longer yet to be content
Outside of its own crystal element.
And he, still lingering at the brink, looked down
And marked the sunshine fleck with gold the brown
And sandy floor which paved that woodland pool.
But then, within the shadows deep and cool

Which the close hemlocks on the surface made,
Two eyes met his yet darker than that shade
And, shining through the watery foliage dim,
Two white and slender arms reached up to him.
"Comest thou again, now all the woods are still,
Fair shape, nor even Echo from the hill
Calls her Narcissus? Would her voice were thine,
Dear speechless image, and could answer mine!
Her I but hear and thee I may but see;
Yet, Echo, thou art happy unto me;
For though thyself art but a voice, sad maid,
Thy love the substance is and my love shade.
Alas! for never may I kiss those dumb
Sweet lips, nor ever hope to come
Into that shadow-world that lies somewhere —
Somewhere between the water and the air.
Alas! for never shall I clasp that form
That mocks me yonder, seeming firm and warm;
But if I leap to its embrace, the cold
And yielding flood is all my arms enfold.
All creatures else, save only me, can share
My beauties, be it but to stroke my hair,
Or hold my hand in theirs, or hear me speak.
The village wives will laugh and clap my cheek;
The forest nymphs will beg me for a kiss,
To make me blush, or hide themselves by this

Clear brook to see me bathe. But I must pine,
Loving not me but this dear ghost of mine."
Then, bending down the boughs, until they dipped
Their broad green fronds, into the wave he slipped,
And, floating breast-high, from the branches hung,
His body with the current idly swung.
And ever and anon he caught the gleam
Of a white shoulder swimming in the stream,
Pressed close to his, and two young eyes of black
Under the dimpling surface answered back
His own, just out of kissing distance: then
The vain and passionate longing came again
Still baffled, still renewed: he loosed his hold
Upon the boughs and strove once more to fold
To his embrace that fine unbodied shape;
But the quick apparition made escape,
And once again his empty arms took in
Only the water and the shadows thin.
Thus every day, when noon lay bright and hot
On all the plains, there came to this cool spot,
Under the hemlocks by the deepening brook,
Narcissus, Phœbus' darling, there to look
And pore upon his picture in the flood:
Till once a peeping dryad of the wood,
Tracking his steps along the slender path
Which he between the tree trunks trodden hath,

Misses the boy on whom her amorous eyes
Were wont to feed; but where he stood she spies
A new-made yellow flower, that still doth seem
To woo his own pale reflex in the stream;
Whom Phœbus kisses when the woods are still
And only ceaseless Echo from the hill
Unprompted cries *Narcissus!*

CARÇAMON.

His steed was old, his armor worn,
And he was old and worn and gray;
The light that lit his patient eyes
It shone from very far away.

Through gay Provence he journeyed on;
To one high quest his life was true,
And so they called him *Carçamon* —
The knight who seeketh the world through.

A pansy blossomed on his shield;
"A token 'tis," the people say,
"That still across the world's wide field
He seeks *la dame de ses pensées*."

For somewhere on a painted wall,
Or in the city's shifting crowd,
Or looking from a casement tall,
Or shaped of dream or evening cloud —

Forgotten when, forgotten where —
Her face had filled his careless eye
A moment ere he turned and passed,
Nor knew it was his destiny.

But ever in his dreams it came
Divine and passionless and strong,
A smile upon the imperial lips
No lover's kiss had dared to wrong.

He took his armor from the wall —
Ah! gone since then was many a day —
He led his steed from out the stall
And sought *la dame de ses pensées.*

The ladies of the Troubadours
Came riding through the chestnut grove:
"Sir Minstrel, string that lute of yours
And sing us a gay song of love."

"O ladies of the Troubadours,
My lute has but a single string;
Sirventes fit for paramours,
My heart is not in tune to sing.

"The flower that blooms upon my shield
It has another soil and spring

Than that wherein the gaudy rose
Of light Provence is blossoming.

"The lady of my dreams doth hold
Such royal state within my mind,
No thought that comes unclad in gold
To that high court may entrance find."

So through the chestnut groves he passed,
And through the land and far away;
Nor know I whether in the world
He found *la dame de ses pensées*.

Only I know that in the South
Long to the harp his tale was told;
Sweet as new wine within the mouth
The small, choice words and music old.

To scorn the promise of the real;
To seek and seek and not to find;
Yet cherish still the fair ideal —
It is thy fate, O restless Mind!

AMETHYSTS.[1]

Not the green eaves of our young woods alone
  Shelter new violets, by the spring rains kissed;
In the hard quartz, by some old April sown,
  Blossoms Time's flower, the steadfast amethyst.

"Here's pansies, they're for thoughts" — weak
    thoughts though fair;
  June sees their opening, June their swift decay.
But those stone bourgeons stand for thoughts
    more rare,
  Whose patient crystals colored day by day.

Might I so cut my flowers within the rock,
  And prison there their sweet escaping breath;
Their petals then the winter's frost should mock,
  And only Time's slow chisel work their death.

If out of those embedded purple blooms
  Were quarried cups to hold the purple wine,
Greek drinkers thought the glorious, maddening
    fumes
  Were cooled with radiance of that gem divine.

Might I so wed the crystal and the grape,
  Passion's red heart and plastic Art's endeavor,
Delirium should take on immortal shape,
  Dancing and blushing in strong rock forever.

SONNET.

The little creek which yesterday I saw
  Ooze through the sedges, and each brackish vein
  That sluiced the marsh, now filled and then again
Sucked dry to glut the sea's unsated maw,
All ebb and flow by the same rhythmic law
  That times the beat of the Atlantic main —
  They also fastened to the swift moon's train
By unseen cords that no less strongly draw.
So, poet, may thy life's small tributary
  Threading some bitter marsh, obscure, alone,
Feel yet one pulse with the broad estuary
  That bears an emperor's fleets through half a zone:
May wait upon the same high luminary
  And pitch its voice to the same ocean's tone.

BEAVER POND MEADOW.

Thou art my Dismal Swamp, my Everglades:
Thou my Campagna, where the bison wades
Through shallow, steaming pools, and the sick air
Decays. Thou my Serbonian Bog art, where
O'er leagues of mud, black vomit of the Nile,
Crawls in the sun the myriad crocodile.
Or thou my Cambridge or my Lincoln fen
Shalt be — a lonely land where stilted men
Stalking across the surface waters go,
Casting long shadows, and the creaking, slow
Canal-barge, laden with its marshy hay,
Disturbs the stagnant ditches twice a day.
Thou hast *thy* crocodiles: on rotten logs
Afloat, the turtles swarm and bask: the frogs,
When come the pale, cold twilights of the spring,
Like distant sleigh-bells through the meadows ring.
The school-boy comes on holidays to take
The musk-rat in its hole, or kill the snake,
Or fish for bull-heads in the pond at night.
The hog-snout's swollen corpse with belly white;
I find upon the footway through the sedge,

Trodden by tramps along the water's edge.
Not thine the breath of the salt marsh below
Where, when the tide is out, the mowers go
Shearing the oozy plain, that reeks with brine
More tonic than the incense of the pine.
Thou art the sink of all uncleanliness,
A drain for slaughter-pens, a wilderness
Of trenches, pockets, quagmires, bogs where rank
The poison sumach grows, and in the tank
The water standeth ever black and deep
Greened o'er with scum : foul pottages, that steep
And brew in that dark broth, at night distil
Malarious fogs bringing the fever chill.
Yet grislier horrors thy recesses hold :
The murdered peddler's body five days old
Among the yellow lily-pads was found
In yonder pond : the new-born babe lay drowned
And throttled on the bottom of this moat,
Near where the negro hermit keeps his boat ;
Whose wigwam stands beside the swamp ; whose meals
It furnishes, fat pouts and mud-spawned eels.
Even so thou hast a kind of beauty, wild,
Unwholesome — thou the suburb's outcast child,
Behind whose grimy skin and matted hair
Warm nature works and makes her creature fair.

Summer has wrought a blue and silver border
Of iris flags and flowers in triple order
Of the white arrowhead round Beaver Pond,
And o'er the milkweeds in the swamp beyond
Tangled the dodder's amber-colored threads.
In every fosse the bladderwort's bright heads
Like orange helmets on the surface show.
Richer surprises still thou hast : I know
The ways that to thy penetralia lead,
Where in black bogs the sundew's sticky bead
Ensnares young insects, and that rosy lass,
Sweet Arethusa, blushes in the grass.
Once on a Sunday when the bells were still,
Following the path under the sandy hill
Through the old orchard and across the plank
That bridges the dead stream, past many a rank
Of cat-tails, midway in the swamp I found
A small green mead of dry but spongy ground,
Entrenched about on every side with sluices
Full to the brim of thick lethean juices,
The filterings of the marsh. With line and hook
Two little French boys from the trenches took
Frogs for their Sunday meal and gathered messes
Of pungent salad from the water-cresses.
A little isle of foreign soil it seemed,
And listening to their outland talk, I dreamed

That yonder spire above the elm-tops calm
Rose from the village chestnuts of La Balme.
Yes, many a pretty secret hast thou shown
To me, O Beaver Pond, walking alone
On summer afternoons, while yet the swallow
Skimmed o'er each flaggy plash and gravelly shallow;
Or when September turned the swamps to gold
And purple. But the year is growing old:
The golden-rod is rusted, and the red
That streaked October's frosty cheek is dead;
Only the sumach's garnet pompons make
Procession through the melancholy brake.
Lo! even now the autumnal wind blows cool
Over the rippled waters of thy pool,
And red autumnal sunset colors brood
Where I alone and all too late intrude.

POSTHUMOUS.

Put them in print?
Make one more dint
In the ages' furrowed rock? No, no!
Let his name and his verses go.
These idle scraps, they would but wrong
His memory, whom we honored long;
And men would ask: "Is this the best —
Is this the whole his life expressed?"
Haply he had no care to tell
To all the thoughts which flung their spell
Around us when the night grew deep,
Making it seem a loss to sleep,
Exalting the low, dingy room
To some high auditorium.
And when we parted homeward, still
They followed us beyond the hill.
The heaven had brought strange stars to sight,
Opening the map of later night;
And the wide silence of the snow,
And the dark whispers of the pines,

And those keen fires that glittered slow
Along the zodiac's wintry signs,
Seemed witnesses and near of kin
To the high dreams we held within.

Yet what is left
To us bereft,
Save these remains,
Which now the moth
Will fret, or swifter fire consume?
These inky stains
On his table-cloth;
These prints that decked his room;
His throne, this ragged easy-chair;
This battered pipe, his councillor.
This is the sum and inventory.
No son he left to tell his story,
No gold, no lands, no fame, no book.
Yet one of us, his heirs, who took
The impress of his brain and heart,
May gain from Heaven the lucky art
His untold meanings to impart
In words that will not soon decay.
Then gratefully will such one say:
"This phrase, dear friend, perhaps, is mine;
The breath that gave it life was thine."

JEANNE D'ARC.

Past midnight long! The moon hath set;
I heard the cock an hour ago.
Still dark! no glimpse of dawn as yet,
Though morning winds begin to blow.
Dear Lord, how swift the time goes by!
There 's something in the air that rings —
Listen! — a whirring as of wings —
The myriad moments as they fly.
O fold me in thine arms, sweet night;
Sweet pitying darkness, longer stay,
And veil me from the cruel light
That creeps to steal my life away.

Lo! even now the waning stars
Grow pale. The matin bell doth toll:
Prisoned like me by casement bars,
It wakes sad echoes in my soul.
For memories woven in the braid
Of sound, bring back the abbey bell
That wont to ring when twilight fell,
Through pastures where my childhood strayed,

What time, when flocks were in the fold,
Saint Agnes and Saint Catharine
Looked from the darkening heavens cold,
And wondrous Voices spake with mine.

Slow-winding Meuse, I would that still,
Along thy grassy valleys deep,
Or half-way up some neighboring hill,
I heard the bleat of simple sheep.
It might not be: Cassandra-wise
I caught in dreams the din of shields;
Far trumpets blown on tented fields
Summoned to deeds of high emprise.
Sweet household cheer was not for me;
The pleasant hum of spinning-wheel,
And children's prattle at my knee —
The bliss that lowly mothers feel.

My spirit winged to bolder flights,
Drawn skyward in ecstatic dreams —
An eagle on the lonely heights,
No ringdove haunting woodland streams.
O solemn joy! O blessed trance,
That seized me when the drums did roll,
And chanting priests in hood and stole
Led on the bannered hosts of France!

In battle winds above me blown
—Fit sign for maiden chevalier—
White lilies streamed, and round me shone
Strange lights, and Voices filled my ear

Foretelling victory, saying "Ride!
Ride onward, mailed in conquering might.
God's legions muster on thy side
To stead thee in the coming fight."
When swords were sheathed and bows unstrung,
What visions awed me as I kneeled,
While down long aisles Te Deums pealed,
And such triumphant anthems rung,
As Miriam, on the Red Sea shore,
Exulting to the timbrel's sound,
Sung, when amid the loud waves' roar
Chariot and horse and rider drowned!

Ay me! 'Tis past; the battle 's won;
The Warrior breaks His useless brand.
Yet even so: His will be done
Who holdeth victory in His hand.
I know that ere the sun is high,
On housetop, wall, and balcony,
Children will clap their hands with glee,
To see the Witch of Orleans die;

And women flout me in the face
Who erst have crossed them at my name,
When in the gazing market-place
My flesh shall feed the hungry flame.

'Twere fit that guns should boom my knell,
Flags droop and funeral music roll;
And through high minster vaults should swell
Sad requiems for my parted soul.
Crowned kings should kneel beside me dead:
Cathedral saints on storied panes,
Where daylight turns to ruby stains,
Should shed their halos round my head.
From nooks in arches twilight-dim,
And niches in the pictured wall,
Stone Christs and carven cherubim
Should look upon my broidered pall.

Alas! for me nor passing bell,
Nor priest to shrive, nor nun to pray.
But rising smoke my death shall tell,
And whistling flames my masses say.
And if among the jeering crowd
Some lonely, beggared knight-at-arms
There be, who once in war's alarms
Hath seen me when the storm was loud,

And followed where my banner led;
He shall my only mourner be,
And from his pitying eyes shall shed
A soldier's tears for love of me.

O holy Mary, stead me then —
A simple maid whose heart may fail:
I would not these grim Island men
Should smile to see my cheek grow pale.
And yet what fairer winding-sheet
Than martyrs' flame? What church-yard mould
More consecrated dust can hold?
What missal claspeth words more sweet
To dying ears, than those He spake:
"Blessed are they — yea, doubly blest. —
Who suffer death for my dear sake.
For them bright crowns and endless rest."

The night is spent. The early gray
Warms into sunrise in the skies;
The sunrise of eternal day —
The threshold steps of paradise.
'Tis written, "After storm comes shine;"
Fierce and more fierce the fires may burn,
But as my limbs to ashes turn,
My soul, O Lord, shall mix with Thine.

Even as yonder trembling star
Melts into morning's golden sea,
So, rapt through Heavenly spaces far,
Shall this poor life be lost in Thee.

THE LAST OF HIS PEOPLE.

CANTO I.

Down in the west a kingdom lay,
  Within its coasts tall cities three:
One on a river that flowed from the south,
  One forest-bound on an inland lea,
And one where the southern river's mouth
  Drank the salt flood of the northern sea.
The two were fair as bridesmaids are,
  But how more fair was Kinderlee!—
Their sister bride who glassed her pride
  In the pictured tide of the northern sea.
Through all the years I mourn for thee,
Dear mother-town, lost Kinderlee.

How goodly were her broad church-towers
  And ancient houses steeple-high:
Their gable peaks and chimney stacks,
  Where swallows on the wind went by
And storks sat brooding on the thatch
  Were Babels to the burgher's eye:
  It seemed, as standing tip-toe there,
    One most could touch the roofing sky.

There sunning on the gargoyled eaves
  The doves sat in a patient row,
While Gretchen with the dove-like eyes
  Glanced through the lattice down below.

For there in painted garden pots
  Sweet smelling herbs and colored blooms
She tended in the window seat;
  Such sunshine filled the pleasant rooms.

The shops were fine with webs of price,
  And on the market days and fairs
The wooden booths and corner stalls
  Held store of town and country wares.

The merchants sent their ventures out
  To sail beyond the rounding main:
Out of the south in many days
  The ships came faring home again,
Down laden to the water's edge,
  With ivory wealth and golden grain.

Secure within the harbor bowl
  In hundred holds the freightage lay:
Sweet figs of Smyrna, Muscat gums,
  And costly silks from far Cathay.

By noon, by night, thy streets were bright, —
Gold days and silver eves in thee;
And music filling day and night
Made life a song in Kinderlee.

Each hour the holy minster bells
With soft psalms blessed the upper airs.
The minstrels went about the streets;
At noonday in the fountain squares
The maids would set their pitchers down
To hear the Swedes with yellow hairs,
Or dark Savoyards touch the harp
And pipe to apes and dancing bears.

When the round moon hung in the lift,
And lights were out in gay bazaar,
Adown the shadows of the street
Some northern ballad echoed far
From voices round the threshold stone
Accordant to the light guitar.

On martyrs' days and holy feasts
What cheer the simple townsfolk made!
How swelled along the narrow ways
In civic pomp the plumed parade!

First went the friars six and six,
With scarlet gowns and shaven polls;
Above them shone the crucifix
Where Christ hung bleeding for lost souls.

Next stepped the red-faced trumpeters
Winding the brazen snaky horn,
And last the mounted men at arms
With broidered banners high upborne.

On either side, the open doors
Made frames for happy groups; down rolled
From windows to the street's stone floors,
Hung rainbow mats and cloths of gold.

Where art thou, O my mother town?
The piping winds from off the sea,
That rocked my cradle in thy walls,
Shall never more blow over thee.
Of all that spoke the kindly speech
I learned to lisp beside thy knee,
There lives not on the lonely earth
Or man or wife or child save me.
The tides shift over thy palace stones,
The grass grows green on Kinderlee.

'T was when the days were waxing long,
And Lent was now a fortnight old;
When March came in with whistle shrill
And hares were mad and mornings chill;
The ballads sung and stories told
At Whitsun ales, remembered still,
And Shrovetide ovens scarce grown cold.

Sudden like wind a trumpet blew:
The king of all the southern land,
With his stealthy hosts as still as ghosts,
Crept onto us over the desert sand.

Seven nights had their watch-fires lit the waste,
Where a thousand tents, like a fleet at sea,
Seemed steering over the barren plain.
Far off the wolves howled mournfully.

But when the seven days were eight,
In battle on the red frontier
We met them there, and met swift fate:
Some fell in fight, some fled in fear.
I saw my king's gray reverend head
Uplifted on the cruel spear

Discrowned, with bloody hair. Thenceforth
That grisly standard led the foe,

Its eyes fixed ever on the north,
As reading all the coming woe.

What boots it tell how Monksbridge fell,
And Stifton chimneys leaguered long;
How ebbed and flowed the southern tide
Till, scarce a score of thousands strong,

Before our eyes the wasted land,
Behind our backs the desert sea,
Grasping a broken, hopeless brand,
We turned to bay in Kinderlee?

CANTO II.

The Easter evening sun was low,
The ebb went oozing out the bay,
The shadows of the quiet masts
Along the quiet water lay.
In that bright evening hush, to stay
Did seem twice sweet, twice hard to go:
Yet when the wakening Easter day
Shall feel the morning land-breeze blow,
That breeze within our sails shall sing,
And round our keel shall sing the sea,
And in our wake shall toss and wave
The beckoning flames of Kinderlee.

Sweet is revenge, the memory sweet
  Of our slain kin; O, sweet to feel
The foeman's stiffening muscles writhe
  In anguish round our smoking steel:

Dear is this little ancient land
  And this old city by the sea;
Yet dearer still our wives, our babes,
  The folk, the tongue of Kinderlee.

Though the brave fear not death, they give
Their lives that those they love may live;
But our lives are too few to save
All that we die for from the grave.

We'll bear our city in our heart
And build it new beyond the sea;
For where we are our land will be, —
There and not here is Kinderlee.

Yet keep once more our Easter eve
  With feast and song; for we will go
With pæans and with joyful hymns
  To Him, who from the Egyptian woe
Exulting led his Israel forth,
  Even from the presence of the foe.

But when the Easter bells give word
That Christ is risen, and in the east
The dawn hangs its gray signal out;
Then leave the dance and leave the feast,

And, hastening to the port, embark;
That ere the morning land breeze die,
Far windward left behind, our home
May vanish 'twixt the sea and sky.

Only a thin white cloud that crawls
Into the sky from out the sea,
Will show where smoke the burning walls
Of our lost city, Kinderlee.

In thee, fair town, we 'll leave behind
A garrison of faithful fire.
Thou shalt not be the victor's spoil,
Dear city of our heart's desire.

And now throughout the town each door
Stood open to the warm spring night,
And festal windows all ablaze
Made every street an aisle of light.

Across each threshold, where they would,
The maskers wandered out and in.
Low breathed the passionate soft flute,
Trembled and wailed the violin.

Yet in the pauses of the dance
Each ear was listening for a token:
The laugh would turn into a sob,
The word begun break off unspoken;
And something in his partner's eye
Told each the other's heart was broken:

Till, as the night grew deep, a golden
Curtain rolled across the past.
A strange intoxication came
And said, "Enjoy! It is the last."

Sweet riot filled the enfranchised blood
That in our veins seemed turned to wine;
The music thrilled exultingly;
Bacchantic grew the dance and free;
The women's eyes began to shine
More brightly through their tears again,
Like moonlight on the falling rain.

Revel so mad, so wild, so sad
  Was never, since the Assyrian king,
While rebels stormed his outer courts,
  Held his last desperate banqueting.

Now I through all the lighted town
  Had joined the maskers here and there;
Had entered many a stranger door,
  And climbed up many an unknown stair.

For all were hosts and guests that night;
  All came and went, without, within;
Welcome to banquet or to dance,
  Alike were comeling, kith and kin.

And many an unacquainted maid,
  Whose beauty to my eyes was new,
Grown sweetly bold and unafraid,
  Gave me the kiss to partners due.

And once I held a rosy pair
  Of palms upon the balcony,
Where silken window curtains sighed
  As the night wind blew off the sea.

I said, "Sweetheart, we meet to part:
  To-morrow on the estranging sea

You will not blush for one more kiss
You gave me on this balcony."

The lips I kissed were sweet with wine;
"Here's no one but the moon, can tell," —
The eyes I kissed were wet with tears;
She whispered in my arms "Farewell."

But now the lamps burned large and dim;
Muffled in yellow mist they shone;
The dancers seemed to wave and swim;
Their voices took a drowsy tone.

The music sounded from far off
Like music that one hears in dreams.
Narcotic grew the ball-room flowers;
The lustres shed unearthly gleams.

Heavy mine eyelids grew with sleep,
My heart forgot both joy and pain, —
To-night, to-morrow, yesterday, —
As though an opiate touched my brain.

I wandered from the crowded rooms,
And groped through darkened corridors,
And stumbled up long staircases,
Until I reached the upper floors;

And found a chamber far apart,
  Where neither light nor sound there came;
And fell upon the bed and sunk
  To sleep, as sinks a dying flame.

CANTO III.

In weary dreams I seemed to hear
  The ring of bells and trumpets blown,
And voices calling, and the tramp
  Of feet upon the pavement stone.

And then I fathomed darker gulfs
  Of sleep, too deep for dreams to sound;
Until mine eyes unclosed and traced
  The figures on the carpet's ground,

And idly watched a shadow vine,
  Whose leaves did tremble evermore
Within the square of still sunshine
  That lay upon the chamber floor.

But suddenly I started up;
  My heart stopped — like a deadly pain
That anodynes have put to sleep,
  My thoughts came piercing back again.

I tottered to the window seat:
  The port was empty, and the town
As silent in the broad full light
  As though the midnight stars shone down.

Far off a hundred sunlit sails
  Before the wind were running free,
Like flocks that browsing westward go
  On the blue pasture of the sea.

As when a mother stands beside
  Her darling's open grave, and hears
The priest speak words of holy cheer;
  Then softly come her sobs and tears:—

But when into the grave they lower
  The little body of her child,
She thinks, "O never, never more,—
  My baby!" and her grief grows wild:

Even so my great despair was dumb,
  Until behind the rounding sea
The last sail vanished, with its freight
  Of all that made life dear to me.

And then my agony broke forth
  In groans and cries and hopeless prayers;

But suddenly I started up
And hurried down the winding stairs,

And through the halls, where still the lamps
Burned sickly in the white sunshine,
And flowers lay fading on the board,
With cups half emptied of their wine.

I ran down all the silent streets,
And through the echoing market-place:
No shopman in his doorway lounged,
No window held the gossip's face.

The dead walls answered back my shouts:
Where the tall houses leaned together
Floated across the strip of sky
A white smoke, curling like a feather.

In every house the door stood wide,
The clocks were ticking on the wall,
The playthings strewed the nursery floor,—
Here lay a hat and there a shawl.

It seemed as though the inmates had
But stepped into the other room;—
Shall I not find the goodwife there,
Or busy housemaid with her broom?

Each home was with some presence warm
  Whose life was here but yesterday;
Whose very pressure, mould and form
  Still fresh on bed or sofa lay,
Whose image from the mirror's face
  Seemed hardly to have passed away.

But now, as heavier plumes of smoke
  Across the windows drifting came,
I mounted to the housetop high,
  And saw where lines of sieging flame

Which all along the landward wall
  Our men had kindled through the town,
With ever widening wings of smoke
  Spread to the wind, sailed slowly down.

At moments when a fiercer gust
  The sooty curtain blew aside,
On the plain's utmost southern edge
  In the strong sunlight I descried

Something like steel that glittered, where
  The vanguard of the foe came on.
Too late! The ocean and the air
  Had snatched the prize his arms had won.

At evening from the neighboring hill
I marked their watch-fires circling far.
The rising tide, the river's flow
Came upward from the dark below;
Over the ruins smouldering still
Hung in the west the evening star, —
A burning candle in the hand
Of a vast form that seemed to stand
Treading the sunset's hem,
Ready to light me on to them
Who in the black deep wandering are.

O planet, let me follow; take
Me with thee in thy shining wake!
Thou settest here, but risest there
Amid the ocean's twilight, where
Upon the deck dim figures stand,
Whisper and weep and talk of me.
"Whether has he been left on land,
Or is he somewhere on the sea
Among the vessels of the fleet?"
"Trust me, he is; and we shall meet
In port at last, if not before.
So dry your tears, it will be sweet,
Dear mother, sister, friends, to greet
Our lost one at the port once more."

Alas! no tongue of man can tell
What port that far-bound navy made.
No whaler, slaver, bark of trade,
Cruising for strange outlandish freight
In each remotest sound and strait
And archipelago, hath spoken
A single sail from Kinderlee.
The land's last corner gives no token,
Nor the uncommunicable sea.

These many years I haunt the wharves
And marts of every seaport town,
And question sailors in the street
For news of that long-vanished fleet, —
The Portuguese, tattooed and brown,
Seal-fishers, Holland skippers old,
With queues and earrings of rough gold,
Whose keels are thick with shells and weed
From Indian harbors, — all in vain:
On northern fiord or tropic main
No lookout yet hath seen them run
Close hauled or free, by moon or sun,
Windward or leeward e'er again.

Yet hope will tell how still they dwell
Within a loftier Kinderlee,

On some green isle or some rich shore,
Unknown, beyond the western sea.

And when glad death shall close mine eyes,
O Christ, though bright thy kingdom be,
Yet ope them not in Paradise
But in that other Kinderlee.

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